

1. (Twice Amended) A crate for holding a beverage container having a lower portion and a central label area, the crate comprising:

a unitary bottom panel having an upper surface;

a first pair of opposed side walls and a second pair of opposed side walls attached to the periphery of the bottom panel to form a unitary construction therewith and defining a compartment area therein; and

a divider assembly having a plurality of divider members attached to the upper surface of the bottom panel and extending longitudinally and transversely in the compartment area to define at least one container receiving area for receiving the beverage container therein, the divider assembly including a plurality of low profile standoff portions having a container contact surface spaced from corresponding divider members, the standoff portions extending inwardly into the at least one container receiving area for engaging the lower portion of the container to provide stability thereto and for maintaining the corresponding beverage container in a spaced relationship from the divider members.

4. (Twice Amended) The crate of claim 1, further comprising a lid member pivotably attached at least one of the first and second pair of opposed side walls, the lid member having a lid inner surface with a lid capture area formed therein corresponding to the at least one container receiving area, the lid capture area sized to receive an upper portion of a respective container for providing alignment to the container.

5. (Amended) The crate of claim 1, wherein the bottom panel has a bottom surface with a plurality of projection receiving areas formed therein.

10. (Amended) The crate of claim 1, wherein the at least one container receiving area has four standoff portions extending therein for engaging the container.

12. (Twice Amended) A crate adapted to store therein a container having a central container portion having label disposed thereon and a lower portion disposed below the label, the crate comprising:

a floor member having an upper surface with a plurality of container support portions disposed thereon;

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a first pair of opposed upstanding side walls and a second pair of opposed upstanding side walls attached to a periphery of the floor member and defining a compartment area with the floor member;

a plurality of vertically disposed divider members extending within the compartment area defining with the container support portions a plurality of container receiving areas, the divider members having a lower portion adjacent the floor member; and

at least one standoff member disposed proximate the floor member and offset inwardly from the lower portion the divider members for extending into a respective one of the plurality of container receiving areas, the at least one standoff member having a height relatively shorter than the divider members such that it is adapted to engage the lower portion of the container and oriented such that it does not contact the label of the container.

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13. (Amended) The crate of claim 12, wherein the plurality of divider members extend longitudinally and transversely in the compartment area.

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17. (Twice Amended) The crate of claim 12, wherein the plurality of standoff members have a mating surface for engaging the container.

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19. (Twice Amended) The crate of claim 12, wherein the divider members have a height relatively shorter than the first and second pairs of opposed upstanding side walls.

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20. (Twice Amended) A crate for retaining containers having an upper container portion and a lower container portion, the crate comprising:

a unitary floor having a periphery and an upper surface with a plurality of container support areas;

a first and second pair of opposed sidewalls extending upwardly from the floor periphery forming a unitary construction therewith and defining a compartment area;

a lid member having a first hinge portion pivotably attached to a second hinge portion of at least one of the first and second pair of opposed side walls and movable between an open and closed position, the lid member having a lid inner surface having a lid capture area formed therein corresponding to a respective one of the container support areas, the lid capture

area sized to receive therein the upper container portion of a respective one of the containers for providing alignment to the container;

a plurality of divider members extending within the compartment and projecting upwardly from the floor to define container receiving areas; and

a plurality of low profile spacer members disposed proximate the floor and spaced inwardly from the divider members into corresponding container receiving areas such that the container support areas and spacer members define pockets for receiving the lower container portion, the spacer members contacting the containers and spacing the containers from the divider members and the sidewalls.

Please add new claims 25-26:

25. (New) The crate of claim 12, wherein the divider members extend above the central container portion of the container.

26. (New) The crate of claim 12, further comprising at least one other standoff member disposed in the corner of the container proximate the floor member for spacing the container from adjacent sidewalls.